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The fundamental principles of theology, as theology is here presented to us, are above and beyond human comprehension and can only be measurably *apprehended*; hence doctors and experts in theology assume or appear to speak with something of a supernatural authority. This has always been the claim of ecclesiastics, more or less distinctly avowed, and men have over and over again risen up in rebellion against it, claiming that the human intellect and conscience may and must eventually sit in judgment upon every system of religious faith, and that those systems or parts of systems which do violence to the reason and judgment of mankind must sooner or later go to the wall. Dr. Shedd, in this treatise, labors hard, and with varying success, to expound the abstruse points of the Calvinistic creeds, and to this extent, we presume, recognizes the right of men to accept or reject his propositions, within the limits of conscience and under the guidance of the spirit of truth. As an exhibit of the distinctive doctrines of the evangelical school, the work is of pre-eminent value.

II.

MEMOIRS OF GENERAL SHERIDAN.

AMONG all the military memoirs called forth by the late Civil War, none surpasses in sustained interest, or in simple, graphic style of narration, that of General Sheridan.* At first the reader probably fears that the autobiographical form of the story may prove to be inconvenient. It is so difficult for any one to sit down and write an account of his own exploits without doing injustice either to himself or the history! In this case, the story grows in attractiveness with every page. For severe simplicity and dignity, and the absence of grandiloquence and perfervid enthusiasm, the book reminds one of the pages of Xenophon. Possibly Sheridan himself might have posed as a greater man, and possibly a greater tribute might have been paid to his memory as a successful soldier, if his history had been written by another person; but the world would have lost a book of classic merit, as this book undoubtedly is, and it will be so regarded by future generations. The closing chapters give an account of his experiences and impressions in the German camp as a spectator of the Franco-German contest of 1870.

III.

THE JEWISH RELIGION.

A BRIEF résumé of the history and evolution of the Jewish religion is undertaken by Rabbi Solomon Schindler, of the Temple Adath Israel, Boston, in "Dissolving Views of the History of Judaism."[†] The three objective points may be stated as follows: Religion has ever been changing; the forms have changed only where their underlying principles have outlived their usefulness; and the present generation has the same right to change its religious practices as had its predecessors. The work is composed of a series of week-day lectures, which were delivered by the rabbi to his congregation in the form of brief biographical studies of prominent Jewish leaders from the earliest times to the present day. These are concise in style and philosophical in tone.

The religion of the early Hebrews is considered from a lower plane than usual, only two biblical characters being introduced, and these are treated with rather

* "Personal Memoirs of P. H. Sheridan," General United States Army. 2 vols. Charles L. Webster & Co.

[†] "Dissolving Views in the History of Judaism." By Rabbi Solomon Schindler. Boston: Lee & Shepard.

scant ceremony. The list of those of the later centuries includes the names of Rabbi Ben Saccai, Saadia, Reuchlin and Pfefferkorn, Sir Moses Montefiore and Rabbi Isaac M. Wise, with many others. Each is considered in connection with contemporaneous events, and a flood of light is thus thrown on the progress of the Jewish religion. The reader turns to the chapter on the Talmud with hopeful anticipations, but his clouded conception of that remarkable work does not become clearer, since the best illustration of its voluminous contents which the author can give is this: "If you could collect, of all the newspapers published in four or five countries during the last four hundred years, at least one copy for every year and paper; if you could take this material—leaders, essays, news, reviews—string them together without title or chronological order, and publish them in book form, you would have a literary production somewhat similar to the Talmud." The Bible, says the rabbi, has long since ceased to be regarded by the Jews as a work of inspiration, and this belief is attributed to the fact that the underlying principles of Judaism have undergone a change. The same, substantially, is said of the Jewish belief in a coming Messiah. Unless this be the work of an extreme radical in the Hebrew fold, we think the average reader will be surprised at, as well as interested in, the unfolding of the doctrines now held by this ancient people. But the author plainly avows, in the closing chapter on "The Present Hour," that it is difficult to formulate the belief of the modern Jew. "Under conditions as they are, it is an absolute impossibility to establish a definition of the term [Judaism] which would suit the many heads and many brains which compose what we call the Jewish community."

IV.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A useful little handbook of social customs, entitled "Hints About Men's Dress,"* by a New York clubman, has just been issued and will serve to answer many questions from the curious and uninitiated in such important matters.

Lee & Shepard issue several valuable reprints and some original works in their Good Company series. Miss Frances Power Cobbe's treatise on "Religious Duty"† presents the moral aspects of Christianity from an intelligent stand-point, and will repay perusal. The range of topics is not exactly limited by the title of the book, since it includes not only religious obligations, but also religious offences, such as blasphemy, apostacy, hypocrisy, perjury, sacrilege, etc., and religious faults, such as thanklessness, irreverence, prayerlessness, impenitence, scepticism, worldliness. The obligations enumerated are thanksgiving, adoration, prayer, repentance, faith, and self-consecration. Miss Cobbe's writings are pervaded by a true and spiritual fervor, and, while they reflect her theological views as a Unitarian, are edifying and helpful to a remarkable degree. Richard Steele's papers on "The Lover,"‡ and other selected topics from *The Englishman* and other periodicals, which delighted our grandfathers and grandmothers, make pleasant reading for this generation, if only to serve the purpose of showing how very much human nature of to-day resembles that of previous generations.

*"Hints about Men's Dress. Right Principles Economically Applied." By a New York Clubman. D. Appleton & Co.

†"Religious Duty." By Frances Power Cobbe. Lee & Shepard.

‡"The Lover," and Selected Papers from *The Englishman*, etc., etc. By Richard Steele. Lee & Shepard.